

Nutrition Education and School Wellness

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Why school-based nutrition education?

- > 95% of all children and adolescents ages 5–17 are enrolled in school¹
- > **20%** of the U.S. works in a school²
- Practicing healthy eating - > ½ of U.S. youths eat 1 of 3 major meals in school³



¹Guidelines for School Health Pgms to Promote Lifelong Healthy Eating: Summary, CDC/DASH, www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/pdf/summary.pdf

²Bill Potts-Datema, MS, Director, Partnerships for Children's Health, Harvard School of Public Health

³Dwyer, J. The School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study. Am. J. Clin. Nutr. 1995; 61 (1 suppl): 173S-177S

Survey – end of '03/'04 school year*

- 44% would like to see improvement in nutrition education
- Foodservice – improved nutrition education was TOP answer



*Responses: 255/537 school districts; 132 non-public schools. Source:
MO Team Nutrition Survey School Nutrition Policies at
http://www.dhss.mo.gov/team_nutrition/Survey.html

What does the school need to achieve healthier students?*

1 of top 2 choices –
\$\$\$ and

**NUTRITION
EDUCATION!**



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Primary goals of wellness

- **Promote student health**
- **Reduce student overweight/obesity**
- **Facilitate student learning of lifelong healthy habits**
- **Increase student achievement**

Nutrition education goal

Integrate sequential nutrition education w/the comprehensive health education program and, to the extent possible, the core curriculum taught at every grade level¹

¹ *Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: a School Health Policy Guide*, National Association of State Boards of Education www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fitthehealthy.mgi

Nutrition knowledge

Nutrition knowledge including, but not limited to:¹

- ▶ benefits of healthy eating
- ▶ essential nutrients
- ▶ nutritional deficiencies
- ▶ principles of healthy weight management
- ▶ use and misuse of dietary supplements
- ▶ safe food preparation, handling and storage

¹ *Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: a School Health Policy Guide*, National Association of State Boards of Education www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fitthealthy.mgi

Nutrition skills

Nutrition-related skills that minimally include the ability to:¹

- ▶ plan healthy meals
- ▶ understand and use food labels
- ▶ apply the principles of the DGA and MyPyramid
- ▶ critically evaluate nutrition information, misinformation and commercial food advertising
- ▶ assess personal eating habits, nutrition goal-setting and achievement

¹ *Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: a School Health Policy Guide*, National Association of State Boards of Education
www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fithealthy.mgi

What does effective nutrition ed look like?

Instructional activities that:¹

- Stress the appealing aspects of healthy eating
- Hands-on
- Behavior-based
- Culturally relevant
- Developmentally appropriate
- Enjoyable



¹ *Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: a School Health Policy Guide*,
National Association of State Boards of Education
www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fithealthy.mqi

Where to get help?

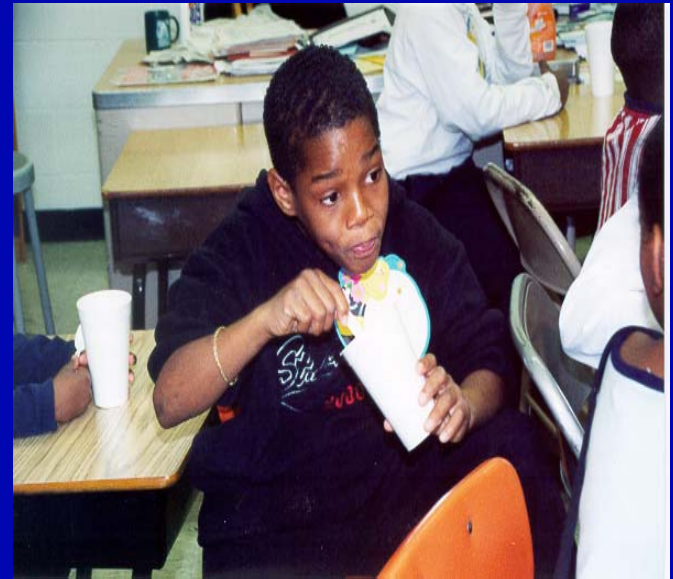
During school

- ▶ Extension: > 60% of school districts
extension.missouri.edu/fnep

**HealthierUS School Challenge

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/HealthierUS/silvergoldtn.html

- ▶ DHSS – evaluated nutrition ed. curriculum
www.dhss.mo.gov/Nutrition_School/Curriculum.html



Where to get help?

After school programming

- ▶ Extension

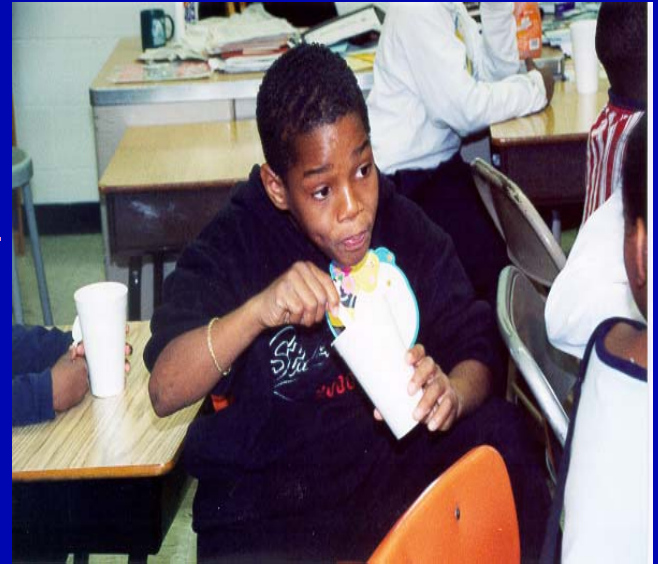
extension.missouri.edu/fnep

- ▶ ReCharge!

www.healthykidsmo.org/news/GettingStartedReCharge.pdf

- ▶ Whiz, Zip & Zap It!

www.healthykidsmo.org/news/NutraNet.pdf



Coordinate the food service program with nutrition instruction¹

- School cafeteria as learning laboratory
- Students learn, gain skills about nutrition in class, apply them in the cafeteria

¹ *Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: a School Health Policy Guide*, National Association of State Boards of Education www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fitthehealthy.mgi

Other school-based activities - family involvement

Families as partners –
support parental
efforts

- Seminars
- Nutrition info.
- Info on school websites



Staff development and training

- Teaching strategies for behavior change
- Focus on non-lecture, active learning methods



Staff wellness

- Staff as role models
- Education on nutrition, healthy eating behaviors and maintaining a healthy weight for optimal health



Think big!

Celebrate small and
often!

